



# THE JAMESTOWN PRESS

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## Proposed school budget nearly \$12 million

Staff, classroom expenses trimmed in 4.26% increase

By Michaela Kennedy

At its Feb 15 meeting, the School Committee voted unanimously to approve its proposed school operating budget for the 2007-2008 fiscal year totaling \$11,947,000, up 4.26 percent from last year's expenses.

Superintendent Robert Power presented the proposed spending plan, which had been pared down .93 percent from the originally proposed 5.19 percent increase in spending. The approved budget includes a decrease in certified staff

and reduced allocations for classroom computer equipment at each school totaling \$5,000. Power noted considerations were given for building maintenance and enrichment programming.

"We're coming to you with a budget that's pretty low. I would caution you about cutting it further," Power said. "We are one of only five districts out of 36 to see a decrease in our special education costs."

School Committee Chairwoman Cathy Kaiser complimented the administration for "taking us out of the triage and actually funding this budget." She asked the Budget Subcommittee to meet again to

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## Town Council names new town solicitors

By Dotti Farrington

The Town Council Tuesday voted 4-1 to name Peter Ruggiero of Warwick town solicitor and Carolyn Mannis of Providence town solicitor for criminal prosecution.

Councilor Barbara Szepatowski voted against the motion because she wanted Mannis as sole, primary solicitor.

Both lawyers have been working for the town since August 2003 as associates of recently-resigned Town Solicitor J. William W. Harsch, with Ruggiero handling labor matters and Mannis serving as prosecutor. (See related story on page 14.)

The council motion did not specify fees to be paid to either of the new solicitors. Ruggiero pre-

sented a proposal for his firm to do all town legal work, including the prosecution of criminal cases, for an annual retainer of \$80,400. Mannis offered to continue as prosecutor for an annual retainer of \$30,000. The council motion also did not include the terms the new solicitors would serve, although their terms are expected to be until the council election in November, as discussed during the interviews of the solicitor candidates.

Eleven lawyers or groups of lawyers vied for parts or all of the town's legal work. Mannis, with a proposal originally only for prosecution, was asked if she could be available for all legal work, and she then submitted a supplemental

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### When ferries connected Jamestown to the world

The wheelhouse of the ferryboat Hammonton shines in the winter sun. The Hammonton served Jamestown from 1930 to 1940 on the west side of the island, and then until 1958 on the east side. The wheelhouse is maintained by Archie Clarke on his Southwest Avenue property.

Photos by Jeff McDonough

## Archers take five deer at Beavertail

By Sam Bari

Five deer were harvested during the recent first-time-ever deer hunting season at Beavertail State Park.

The state Department of Environmental Management opened 100 acres at the north end of the park to hunters with bow and arrow from Nov. 13 to Jan. 31.

Last week, Lori Gibson, the DEM supervising wildlife biologist, posted the results. The special 66-day season attracted 34 registered hunters who harvested five deer in a little over nine weeks. In November and December, hunters were allowed in the park from Monday through Friday. During January, they hunted seven days a week.

"Although the numbers seem low, five deer is pretty good considering the number of hunters and the conditions of the hunt," Gibson said. She also said the DEM expected the numbers to be low the first season. "If we do it again next year, we hope to attract more hunters and get better results," she

said.

Dick Rembijas, a lifelong Jamestown resident and hunter, agreed with Gibson. He said that 14 percent of registered hunters bagging a deer is a respectable number considering the hunting conditions. "I would not have been surprised if the number were around eight percent. The area is flat. There are few tree stands. And hunting with bow and arrow is never easy. When little cover is available, and hunters are exposed, the playing field is more than leveled. It's in favor of the deer," he said.

On private land, a little over a quarter mile north of Beavertail State Park, Rembijas tagged three deer during the regular hunting season. However, he said that hunting with a muzzleloader or shotgun in a tree stand is much different from hunting with a bow and arrow in an exposed area. "The deer are there, but they are easily frightened," he said. "When they see hunters or any human activ-

See "Deer" on page 22

## Council tells harbor commission to revise mooring fee schedule

By Dotti Farrington

The town councilors by consensus Tuesday declined to adopt the mooring fee schedule recommended by the Harbor Management Commission, advising the commission to distribute the proposed fee increases more evenly and return to them with a revised proposal as soon as possible.

### Affordable housing

The councilors also asked Town Administrator Bruce Keiser to take all possible actions to speed the turnover of the town offices site at 44 Southwest Ave. to the Church Community Housing Corp. of Newport to develop as affordable housing. Keiser reported that Newport Appraisal has been hired to prepare a market-value appraisal, expected by the end of

March.

William Munger, owner of Conanicut Marine Services, suggested that the town consider using the site for mixed business and residential use that would represent the highest and best use to set a market value for the benefit of water customers. The town will pay the municipal water department the market value of the property, which will be used to offset water customer rates. Those rates, currently being reviewed by a consultant, include debt service for major water-system improvements and a new water treatment plant.

Keiser said the market value will reflect the site's location in a commercial district, assuring a maximum possible value. He

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